

Light up your home efficiently **and** save money

Lighting represents as much as 25% of your home's electrical use, so it is a significant part of your monthly utility bill.

Lighting affects the way you feel, work, and interact with others. It helps you accomplish everyday tasks. How would you manage without the light you use to read your paper, the desk lamp your children use when doing their homework, or the lighting you use to prepare your favorite meals? Light gives us beauty as well as vision, and the quality is often far more important to us than the quantity.

Efficient lighting is a science as well as an art. And yet, most of us still use the incandescent bulb, which is basically the same technology invented by Thomas Edison over 100 years ago. Since lighting represents as much as 25 percent of your home's electrical use, increasing your lighting efficiency is one of the easiest and fastest ways to lower your energy bills.

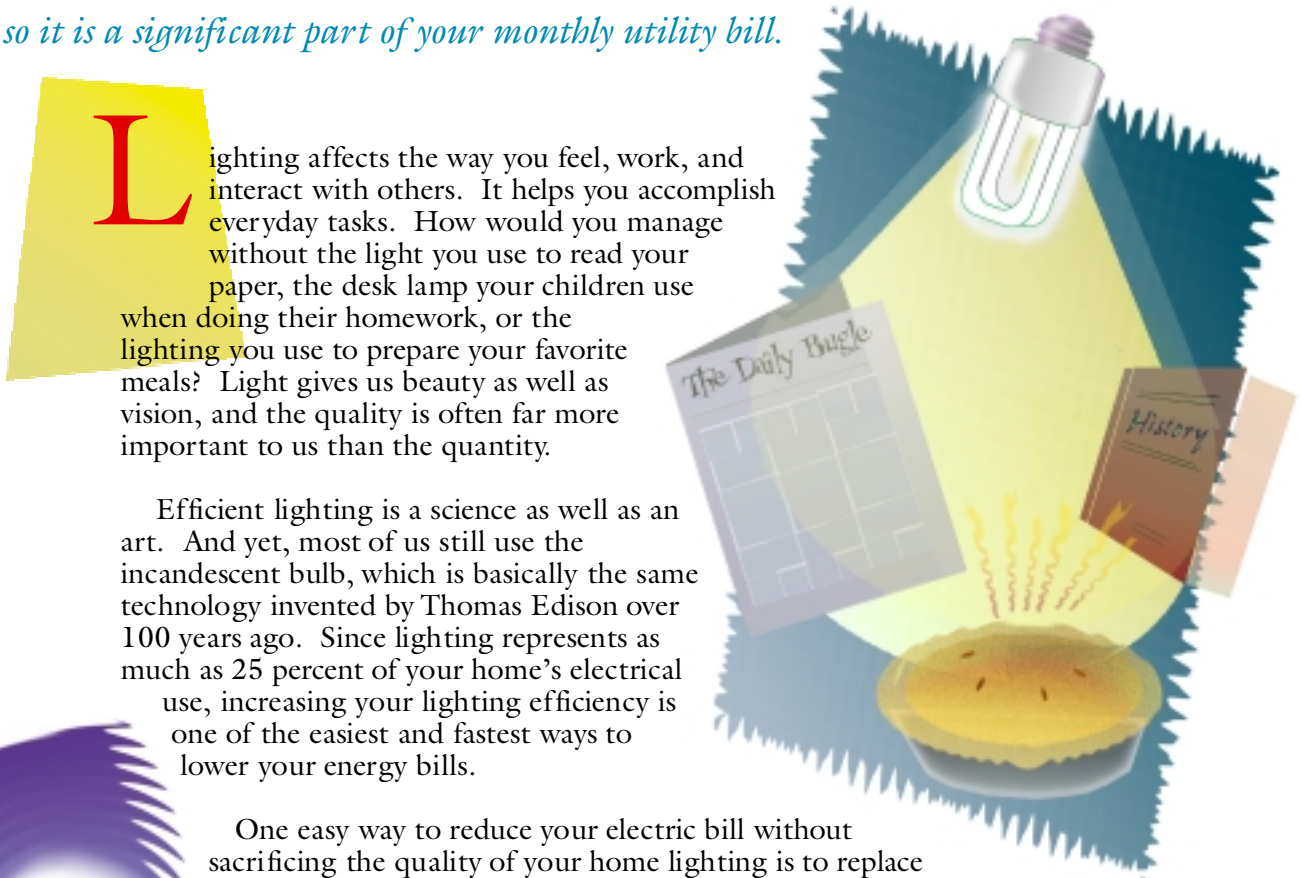
One easy way to reduce your electric bill without sacrificing the quality of your home lighting is to replace your incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights.

Compact fluorescents come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and wattages to fit most lamps and light fixtures. The light they provide is a soft, warm color, similar to incandescents, but they use up to 75% less energy, and should last approximately 10,000 hours. That is about ten times longer than a regular incandescent light bulb.

The original compact fluorescents, introduced quite some time ago, had some drawbacks. But those shortcomings have largely disappeared, and newer compact fluorescents are very easy to live with.

Halogen lights were once considered the lighting of the future. Although some halogens use up to 20 percent less energy than incandescent lights and last anywhere from 2,000 to 6,000 hours, they are far less efficient than compact fluorescents. In addition, halogens burn hotter than other lights, so keep them at least six inches away from all flammable materials.

Popular halogen torchieres use bulbs in the 300-watt range. New compact fluorescent torchieres use two 36-watt lamps that provide 25 percent more light using one-fourth the energy of the halogen torchiere. The new compact fluorescent torchieres are also far safer than the halogen torchieres because they do not operate at the same high temperatures.

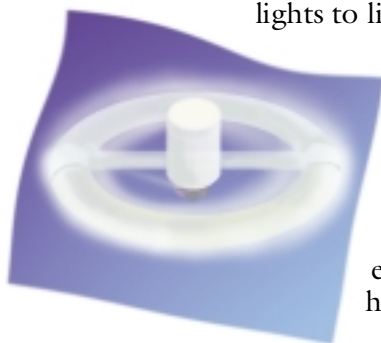


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When you purchase your first compact fluorescent bulb, you may experience price shock, but don't let that scare you away. It's true that these lights are more expensive than incandescent bulbs, but they will last ten times longer! The best place to use compact fluorescents is where the lights burn an average of an hour or more a day.



Exterior lighting is one of the best places to make use of energy efficient lights because of their long hours of use. You can get everything from low voltage lights to line your



walkways and patio to lights that are solar powered and convert sunlight directly into electricity, adding nothing to your utility bill!

The invention of incandescent light bulbs was an incredible event, but considering what you spend each year to light your home and yard, it is fortunate that you have more choices now.



Ballasts

Fluorescent lights require ballasts to work. A ballast is merely the device that regulates the electricity used by the bulb. There are a couple of different types of ballasts you can choose. Electronic ballasts virtually eliminate flicker, operate quietly, and maximize energy efficiency. Magnetic ballasts flicker 120 times every second, which may bother some people.

When you replace fluorescent lights, it is important that the light and ballast are compatible in voltage and current, so be sure and match the right tubes with your ballast. The hardware, home improvement, or lighting specialty store where you purchase your lights should be able to advise you on the proper tubes for your existing ballast. Be sure to take the old lamp with you, or the appropriate reference numbers taken from the ballast.



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